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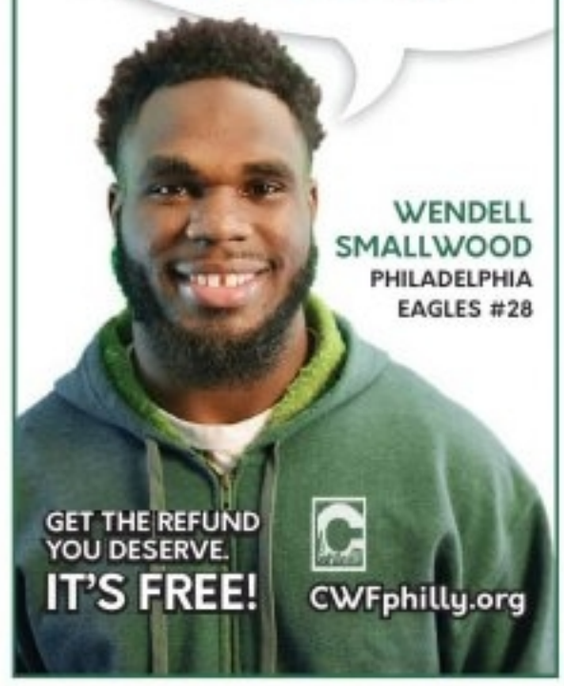

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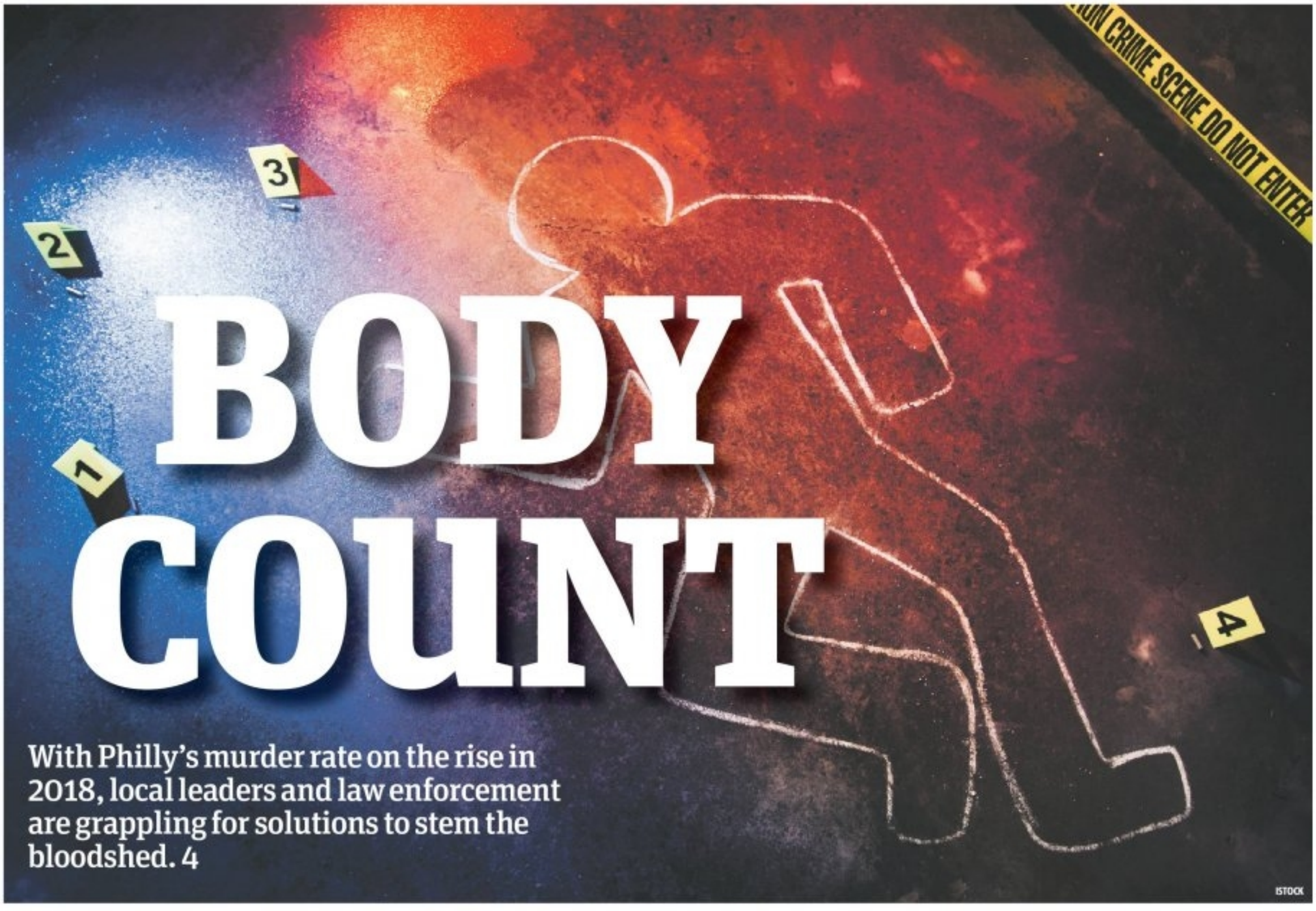

BODY COUNT

With Philly's murder rate on the rise in 2018, local leaders and law enforcement are grappling for solutions to stem the bloodshed. 4

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4 THINGS TO KNOW

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

SAM NEWHOUSE, REPORTER

As of this writing, there have been 325 murders in Philadelphia in 2018 — more than any year-end total for the last five years running, since the city hit a 50-year low in 2013. With a shooting nearly every day, the police department's rate of closing homicide cases hovering at one-third, and violence concentrated in high-poverty areas, the city is developing a "public health crisis" response to address gun violence. But there will be no easy solutions, experts say. ***Read more inside and on metrophilly.us.***

ACCUSED RUSSIAN AGENT POISED TO PLEAD GUILTY

1 A former Russian agent accused of trying to infiltrate the National Rifle Association and influence U.S. policy toward Russia is expected to plead guilty this week following a deal between her lawyers and U.S. prosecutors, according to court filings on Monday. Exactly how the deal will be structured for defendant Maria Butina and whether or not Butina may agree to cooperate with prosecutors was not immediately clear. U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan in Washington scheduled a hearing for Dec. 12. Former American University graduate student Butina had previously pleaded not guilty to U.S. charges in July that she was acting as an agent of the Russian government and conspiring to take actions on Russia's behalf. Prosecutors have accused her of working with a Russian official and two U.S. citizens to try to infiltrate the powerful NRA lobby group that has close ties to Republican politicians including President Donald Trump, and influence Washington's policy toward Moscow. One of the two Americans mentioned in the prosecutors' criminal complaint was Paul Erickson, a conservative U.S. political activist who was dating Butina.

DYLANN ROOF ADMIRER CHARGED IN BOMB PLOT

2 An Ohio woman who corresponded with Charleston, South Carolina, church shooter Dylann Roof was charged on Monday with planning to bomb a Toledo, Ohio, bar, prosecutors said. Elizabeth Lecron, 23, was accused of purchasing gunpowder and screws that the FBI said she intended to use in an "upscale mass murder" at the bar, U.S. Attorney Justin Herdman said in a statement. Lecron came to the attention of police this year after an associate expressed a desire to conduct an attack. Investigators found a number of social media posts by Lecron glorifying mass murderers, including Roof and the Columbine High School shooters. She visited Columbine High School this year and exchanged letters with Roof, attempting to send Nazi literature to the avowed white supremacist, according to an affidavit filed in the case. Roof was sentenced to death for the 2015 killing of nine worshipers at an African-American church in Charleston. In discussions with undercover FBI agents, Lecron also talked about an attack to free farm animals, bombing a pipeline and attacking her workplace.

4 KILLED AFTER LANDSLIDE IN SICHUAN

3 Rescuers work at the site after a landslide hit Xuyong County on Monday in Luzhou, Sichuan Province of China. Four people were killed after Sunday's landslide, according to Xinhua on Monday. The cause of the landslide is under investigation.

GETTY IMAGES

BREXIT IN TURMOIL AS UK'S MAY PULLS VOTE

4 British Prime Minister Theresa May on Monday postponed a parliamentary vote on her Brexit deal to seek more concessions, but the European Union refused to renegotiate and lawmakers doubted her chances of winning big changes. May's abrupt move less than 30 hours before parliament was to vote opens up a range of possibilities from a Brexit without a deal, a last-minute agreement or another E.U. referendum. Admitting she faced defeat on Britain's potentially biggest political and economic shift since World War II, May was laughed at by some lawmakers when she said there was broad support for key aspects of her deal reached with the E.U. last month. However, "If we went ahead and held the vote tomorrow, the deal would be rejected by a significant margin," she told parliament of the agreement she clinched after 18 months of tortuous negotiations. With her position in jeopardy, May said she would now go back to the E.U. and seek reassurances over the so-called Irish "backstop," an insurance policy to ensure no return to a hard border on the island of Ireland.

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Bloody weeks cap deadlier-than-usual year in Philadelphia

Murders are on the rise in Philadelphia, and people on the front lines warn there is no easy fix.

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Portraits of murder victims line the Art Museum steps during the June 2018 "Fill the Steps Against Gun Violence" rally organized by Philadelphia Daily News columnist Helen Ubiñas. GETTY IMAGES

Recent, rosy reports based on national statistics have exulted that murder rates dropped in 2018. But that's not the case in Philadelphia.

There are three weeks left, but 2018 has already seen more murders than past years. As of Dec. 10, the Philadelphia Police Department reported 325 homicides, a 10 percent increase year-over and more murders than in all of 2017, which ended with 315 homicides and 2,205 non-fatal shootings. The 2018 count to date also exceeds the city's year-end totals for every year since 2012, which ended with 331 homicides.

Demographically speaking, the vast majority of victims are black and brown males aged 15 to 34, as are many of the perpetrators.

The grim statistic also represents a reversal of the downward trend in homicides that bottomed out at 246 murders in 2013, the city's lowest total since the 1960s.

"This is a public health epidemic of epic proportions," Reuben Jones, a local activist and organizer with the Philadelphia Community Bail Fund, said of the growing murder rate. "We already surpassed the numbers of the last couple years. We're only in early December. We've seen a bunch of multiple homicides lately. We had taken [the homicide count] down, and everyone celebrated the 50-year low. But ever since then, it's been creeping back up. We have to hold our elected officials and leaders accountable. This is unacceptable."

The last several weeks of 2018 have been stained by several particularly gruesome multiple homicides, including the Nov. 19 quadruple murder on the 5100 block of Malcolm Street in West Philly. Two stepbrothers and two sisters in their early 20s were executed in cold blood. Homicide detectives later arrested three men who they say killed the four to steal a small amount of drugs the stepbrothers had found in a house they were fixing up.

As the list of victims grows longer, police officers and detectives have an even harder job than ever. While all of the above-mentioned cases got media attention and were quickly closed, hundreds more remain open. For murders in 2018, the police department had only cleared about 31 percent of cases, the Philadelphia Inquirer recently reported. Detectives often run up against a lack of cooperation from witnesses to crimes, despite the city offering a $20,000 reward to witnesses in all murder cases.

"Unfortunately, there's a great likelihood that if you shoot and kill somebody, you're going to get away with it," Jones said.

Philadelphia leaders are aware of the problem. After the bloody summer, in September, Mayor Jim Kenney ordered senior city leadership to develop a plan "for how to dramatically reduce the killings and shootings in Philadelphia" by looking "at violence through the lens of public health," the mayor's office said. That plan is due by Jan. 5, 2019.

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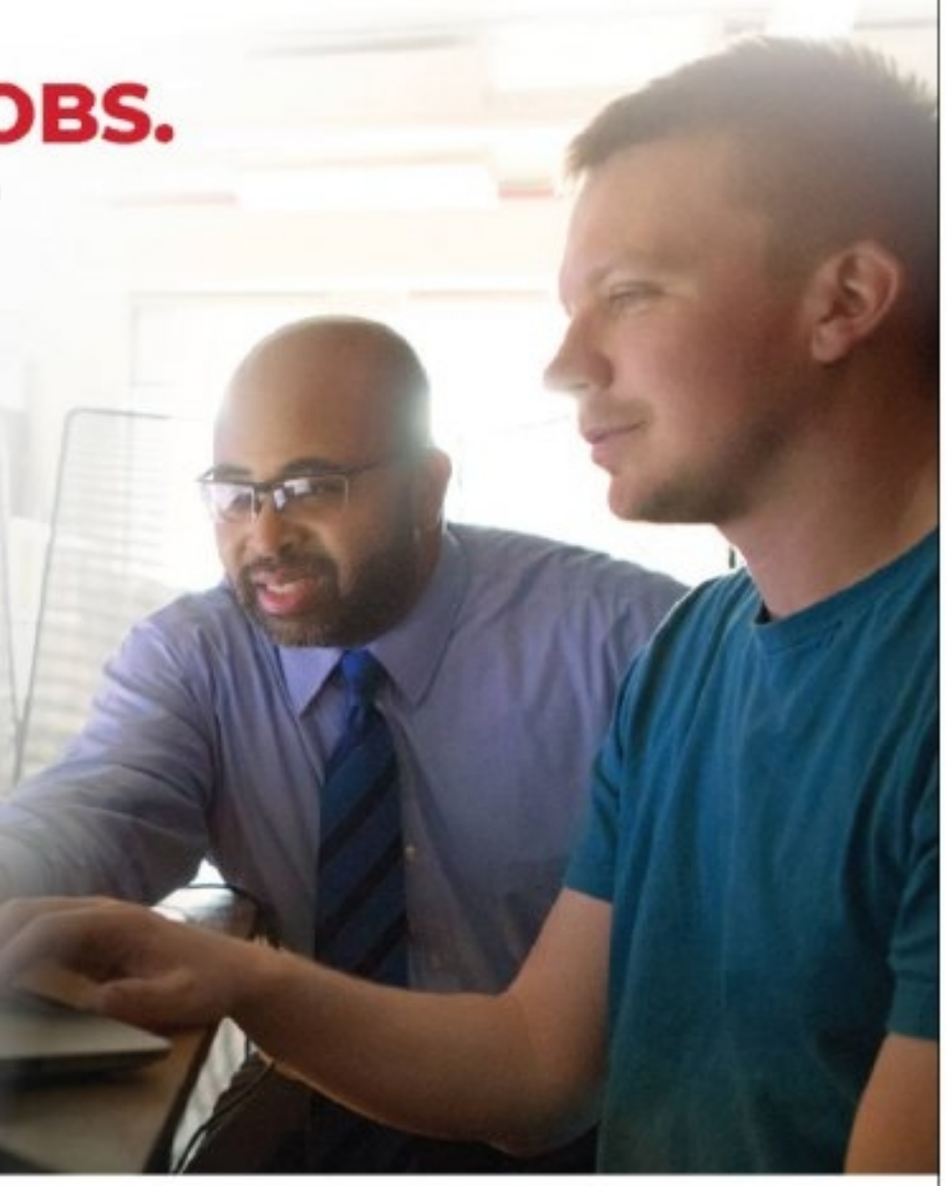

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Century-old stained-glass windows and other items stolen from North Philly mansion

The FBI and Philly Police are investigating a burglary of historic proportions at the former Disston Mansion.

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

It's not your typical target for a burglar, but at least these crooks have taste.

Rare remnants of intersecting Philadelphia histories were unceremoniously removed recently from the home they have occupied for more than a century.

The Philadelphia Police Department and FBI are currently investigating a burglary at the former Disston Mansion on North 16th Street, where two eight-foot-tall stained-glass windows and a brass lamp fixture were recently stolen.

The mansion, which currently belongs to the Unity Mission Church founded by Father Divine, is catalogued in the Library of Congress' Historic American Buildings Survey.

Police believe the burglary took place in the early-morning hours of Dec. 2. "There was minor damage to a grate in the basement (possibly the point of entry) and damage to a door that appeared forced open," a police bulletin stated.

The stained-glass windows, each measuring three-and-a-half feet wide and nearly eight feet tall, are believed to date to 1881, when this mansion was erected on North 16th Street between Oxford and Jefferson streets. The brass lamp fixture which stood on the banister of the mansion's grand staircase is believed to date to renovations made in 1906 or 1920.

"Due to the significant historical value of the stolen items, the FBI is involved in the investigation," Philly Police said in a bulletin.

Formally known as the Albert H. Disston Mansion, the roots of this property date nearly a century and a half back, when Philadelphia still thrived as the "workshop of the world."

The name Disston emerged as that of one of the city's most renowned companies, Disston Saw Works, which was founded in 1850 by Henry Disston under the name Keystone Saw Works and grew to sell its saws across the world while expanding manufacturing operations across Tacony. Disston's legacy is still carried on today by a successor company, Disston Precision in Northeast Philadelphia.

The family's historic mansion in North Philadelphia, currently owned by a church, was

Two century-old stained-glass windows were recently stolen from the historic Albert Disston mansion in North Philadelphia.

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built in the early 1880s by Albert Disston, one of Henry Disston's five sons. Several Disstons had family homes near North Broad Street. Designed by architect Edwin F. Durang, with interior design by George Herzog, the mansion had just been completed when Albert Disston died in 1883, in his early 30s, after a short illness, leaving the mansion to his family.

"Due to the significant historical value of the stolen items, the FBI is involved in the investigation."

Philly Police bulletin

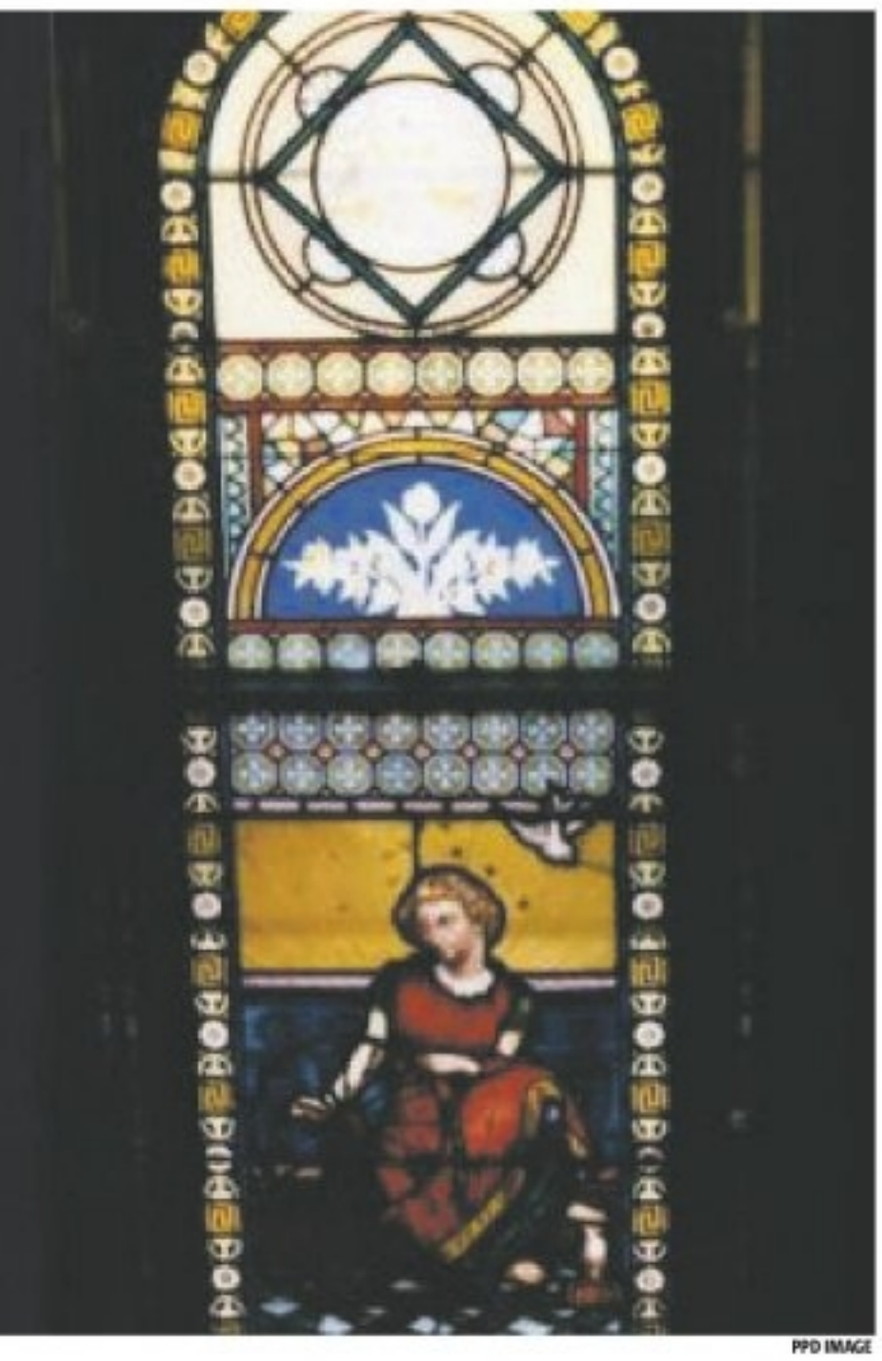
After his widow's death in the 1920s, the mansion was sold to a social group called The Progress Club before shifting back to private ownership, changing hands again to the Bible Institute of Pennsylvania, and ultimately being purchased in 1946 by Father Divine, founder of the Unity Mission Church, a multiracial, socially progressive religious sect.

The Unity Mission Church is still alive today, but one of its best-known landmarks is the Divine Lorraine, former apartments which Divine purchased two years later a little further south on Broad Street and converted into the international center of his sect, known for offering pay-as-you-can communal meals to Philly's impoverished residents, among other legacies.

After decades of vacancy and decay, the Divine Lorraine recently reopened to the public with brand-new luxury apartments inside.

"It hurts," Disston mansion custodian Eric Terry told CBS Philly of the burglary, "especially when you know Father Divine and Mother Divine and the rest of the members would give you anything."

Anyone with information about the crime is urged to contact Philly Police by calling 215-686-TIPS (8477) or texting a tip to PPDTIP (773847).



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Trump calls hush money payments a 'simple private transaction'

Democrats say the president may face impeachment.

Donald Trump on Monday defended hush money payments reported by his former lawyer, responding a day after Democratic lawmakers said the president could face impeachment and jail time if the transactions are proven to violate campaign finance laws.

Trump said on Twitter that Democrats were wrongly targeting "a simple private transaction." Court filings last week drew renewed attention to six-figure payments made during the 2016 presidential campaign by Trump's personal lawyer to two women so they would not discuss their alleged affairs with the candidate.

U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, who will lead the Judiciary Committee when Democrats take control of the House of Representatives next month, said on Sunday that if the payments were found to violate campaign finance laws it would be an impeachable offense.

His Democratic counterpart on the Intelligence Committee, Rep. Adam Schiff, said Trump could be indicted once he leaves office and could "face the real prospect of jail time."

Under U.S. law, campaign contributions, defined as things of value given to a campaign to influence an election, must be disclosed. Such payments are also limited to $2,700 per person.

Earlier this year, Trump acknowledged repaying his former lawyer Michael Cohen for the $130,000 paid to porn star Stephanie Clifford, also known as Stormy Daniels. He previously disputed knowing anything about the payments.

On Monday, the president again denied wrongdoing and sought to shift any blame to Cohen. One post misspelled the word "smoking" twice, drawing criticism and ridicule on Twitter.

"Democrats can't find a Smocking [*sic*] Gun tying the Trump campaign to Russia after James Comey's testimony. No Smocking [*sic*] Gun … No Collusion," he wrote, referring to Fox News comment on the case.

"So now the Dems go to a simple private transaction, wrongly call it a campaign contribution, which it was not," Trump wrote. He said that even if it were a campaign contribution, it would amount to a civil case, adding, "but it was done correctly by a lawyer and there would not even be a fine. Lawyer's liability if he made a mistake, not me."

Trump has denied affairs with Stormy Daniels and the other woman who Cohen said was given hush money, former Playboy model Karen McDougal.

U.S. prosecutors on Friday sought prison time for Cohen, Trump's self-proclaimed "fixer," for the payments they said were made in "coordination with and at the direction of" Trump, as well as on charges of evading taxes and lying to Congress.

The case stemmed from a federal investigation into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and possible collusion with Trump's campaign. Russia has denied interfering and Trump has said his campaign did not cooperate with Moscow.

Legal experts are divided over whether a sitting president can be charged with a crime, as well as on whether a violation of campaign finance law would be an impeachable offense. REUTERS

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Once a critic of Obama for having three chiefs of staff, Trump now seeks his third

There is still a tweet for everything.

In 2012, Donald Trump criticized then-President Obama for having three chiefs of staff in three years. Now, Trump is looking for his third after just 23 months.

"3 Chief of Staffs in less than 3 years of being President: Part of the reason why @BarackObama can't manage to pass his agenda," Trump wrote in January 2012.

On Friday, Trump announced that current chief of staff John Kelly would be leaving the White House at the end of the year. Kelly arrived in July 2017 to replace Reince Priebus, who lasted barely six months in the job.

Historically speaking, Obama had an above-average number of chiefs of staff during his first term. Rahm Emanuel served from January 2009 to October 2010, when he resigned to run for mayor of Chicago. Pete Rouse was an interim for three months, succeeded by Bill Daley, who left after a year in January 2012. Jack Lew then served until January 2013.

But in terms of general staff turnover, Trump blows every U.S. president out of the water. Less than two years into the job, he is on his third attorney general, second secretary of state, third national security adviser, fifth communications director, second press secretary, second secretary of health and human services, second EPA administrator and third VA secretary.

According to a Dec. 7 analysis by the Brookings Institution, 62 percent of Trump's "A team," or senior-level advisers, has turned over since he took office in January 2017.

In the latest chief of staff hunt, Trump is having a more difficult time than before. The New York Times reported that Nick Ayers, Vice President Mike Pence's current chief of staff, turned down the position over the weekend and will be leaving the administration.

The Atlantic reported Monday that three other leading candidates — Mick Mulvaney, the director of the Office of Management and Budget; Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin; and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer — say they don't want the job.

According to Reuters, Trump is also considering Republican Rep. Mark Meadows, former campaign adviser David Bossie, and former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. MICHAEL MARTIN

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Bug business: Cockroaches corralled by the millions in China to crunch waste

A billion cockroaches are fed 50 tons of waste.

In the near pitch-dark, you can hear them before you see them — millions of cockroaches scuttling and fluttering across stacks of wooden boards as they devour food scraps by the ton in a novel form of urban waste disposal.

The air is warm and humid — just as cockroaches like it — to ensure the colonies keep their health and voracious appetites.

Expanding Chinese cities are generating more food waste than they can accommodate in landfills, and cockroaches could be a way to get rid of hills of food scraps, providing nutritious food for livestock when the bugs eventually die and, some say, cures for stomach illness and beauty treatments.

On the outskirts of Jinan, capital of eastern Shandong province, a billion cockroaches are being fed with 50 tons of kitchen waste a day — the equivalent in weight to seven adult elephants.

The waste arrives before daybreak at the plant run by Shandong Qiaobin Agricultural Technology Co., where it is fed through pipes to cockroaches in their cells.

Shandong Qiaobin plans to set up three more such plants next year, aiming to process a third of the kitchen waste produced by Jinan, home to about seven million people.

A nationwide ban on using food waste as pig feed due to African swine fever outbreaks is also spurring the growth of the cockroach industry.

"Cockroaches are a biotechnological pathway for the converting and processing of kitchen waste," said Liu Yusheng, president of Shandong Insect Industry Association.

Cockroaches are also a good source of protein for pigs and other livestock. "It's like turning trash into resources," said Shandong Qiaobin chairwoman Li Hongyi.

In a remote village in Sichuan, Li Bingcai, 47, has similar ideas.

Li, formerly a mobile phone vendor, has invested a million yuan ($146,300) in cockroaches, which he sells to pig farms and fisheries as feed and to drug companies as medicinal ingredients.

His farm now has 3.4 million cockroaches.

"People think it's strange that I do this kind of business," Li said. "It has great economic value, and my goal is to lead other villagers to prosperity if they follow my lead."

His village has two farms. Li's goal is to create 20.

$146.3K

Li, formerly a mobile phone vendor, has invested a million yuan ($146,300) in cockroaches, which he sells to pig farms and fisheries as feed and to drug companies as medicinal ingredients.

Elsewhere in Sichuan, a company called Gooddoctor is rearing six billion cockroaches.

"The essence of cockroach is good for curing oral and peptic ulcers, skin wounds and even stomach cancer," said Wen Jianguo, manager of Gooddoctor's cockroach facility.

Researchers are also looking into using cockroach extract in beauty masks, diet pills and even hair-loss treatments.

At Gooddoctor, when cockroaches reach the end of their life span of about six months, they are blasted by steam, washed and dried, before being sent to a huge nutrient extraction tank.

Asked about the chance of the cockroaches escaping, Wen said that would be worthy of a disaster movie but that he has taken precautions.

"We have a moat filled with water and fish," he said. "If the cockroaches escape, they will fall into the moat and the fish will eat them all." REUTERS

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SEPTA won't let you ride if you're short change, but if I put my three dollars in to ride, I can't get my 50 cents back. I can only imagine all the money they've made doing this. What a rip-off. They need to enforce rules as they do for the regionals out to the suburbs. They need to enforce quietness, unless it's a baby. Folks are just trying to get to their destinations; all the young children boarding, loud and disrespectful, rowdy and cussing, is too much. You have people who want to get home from shopping, working or whatever and would just like a peaceful ride.

— **Safiya Bankhead,** *Metro Philly reader*

HEY YOU, DOWN IN FRONT!!!

You apparently feel you are the only person who deserves to enjoy the concert. What about the unfortunate people behind you who paid to see a professional musician, but all they can see is your amateur back? You are not the entertainment, so sit down and let everyone see what they paid for.

— **Five-foot music lover,** *Metro US reader*

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BACK FROM THE DEAD: TV SHOWS THAT GAIN A SECOND LIFE

This Thursday, the beloved Fox comedy "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" will rise from the dead following its cancellation last year — and find its new home on NBC. This is great news as the news of its cancellation was head-scratching, to say the least. The Andy Samberg-starring show was beloved by both critics and fans alike, and was the next logical heir to creators Michael Shurr and Dan Goor's classic sitcom "Parks and Recreation." While "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" is one of the few shows that has been lucky to be saved by a sympathetic network over the years, there have been many shows that have been swept off the cutting board for good. For now, it seems like we've won this one, tiny battle. And it will be great to watch both "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" and "The Good Place" on the same channel. Huzzah!

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Know your target and aim high. The more you do now, the easier it will be to justify spending more time with friends and family.

Taurus How you deal with others will determine what you get in return. Now's the time to make an adjustment to accommodate loved ones.

Gemini Look at the big picture, but don't take on more than you can handle. Don't rely on others.

Cancer Be innovative when it comes to your work and when faced with competition. How you handle others will reflect how you are treated in return.

Leo You can have fun without going to extremes. Pace yourself and be careful not to make the wrong impression on someone.

Virgo Get out and get things done. Going shopping or attending a community event will do you good and bring you closer to a loved one.

Libra Touch base with an old friend or relative. Including isolated people in your plans will be a kind gesture.

Scorpio Let your heart lead the way. Share your feelings and vision for the new year. Plans with a loved one will bring you closer.

Sagittarius A personal change should be carefully planned before it's executed.

Capricorn Personal gains can be made if you stick to your plan. The way you handle a problem will make a difference.

Aquarius Take better care of yourself. Emotional matters will cause confusion or uncertainty that could lead to a poor financial choice.

Pisces Keep your spending to a minimum and refrain from overindulgence. Do your best to stabilize your life. EUGENIA LAST

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LIFESTYLE

A spectacular spectacle

Franklin Square Park's Holiday Festival will have two special guests this week.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

During the holiday season, Franklin Square Park transforms into a magical, lit-up wonderland full of festive activities, treats and of course, Santa himself. This week, the holiday celebrations are extra special: Mayor Jim Kenney and Councilman Mark Squilla will oversee the festivities on Wednesday, Dec. 12, and will be getting into the holly-jolly spirit themselves.

Mayor Jim Kenney will sport his best Buddy the Elf costume while Councilman Mark Squilla will be dressed as Kris Kringle himself. Buddy and Santa will ignite the Franklin Square Electrical Spectacle Holiday Light Show at 5 p.m. to kick off all of the fun. The visit to the Franklin Square Holiday Festival (presented by Chase) by Mayor Kenney and Councilman Squilla continues an annual tradition that began with the first Electrical Spectacle in 2013.

There are meet-and-greet events with Santa.

The dazzling light show, presented by PECO, features 75,000 lights choreographed to seasonal music. The first show of the evening begins at 4:30 p.m. and continues every 30 minutes until 8 p.m. The Franklin Square light show is free and open to the public through Dec. 31.

The light show is just the start. While at Franklin Square Park, guests can also check out a beer garden with cozy fire pits and indulge in Ben's Sweets & Treats (located inside a heated tent) that include s'mores and a gourmet hot chocolate station.

Special holiday events will be happening throughout the month as well, including Santa Paws (Dec. 15, 4-5 p.m.), where guests can bring their four-legged friends to take a picture with Santa and have them

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The light show features over 75,000 lights. ALL PHOTOS JEFF FUSCO

pose for a free holiday pet portrait done by artists from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The next two Saturdays also bring Milk & Cookies with Santa (Dec. 15 and 22, 4-5 p.m.). Kris Kringle will be available to tell stories, take pictures and snack on some milk and cookies with families in the heated Franklin Square Pavilion. Tickets are required ($20).

There is also the Jingle & Mingle event with Santa. The big man in red will be strolling around the park and will even take pictures with holiday lovers for free on select days (Dec. 15 and 22, 5:30-7:30 p.m.)

The final night of the Franklin Square Holiday Festival, on New Year's Eve, will be a very special night full of family-friendly fun. The evening will feature music and crafts before the Square Drop from atop SquareBurger at 6 p.m. Sugar House's New Year's Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront will be viewable from the Square that night as well. And that's not all. The indoor Franklin Square Pavilion will also host a Kids' Dance Party until 8 p.m. for the final Electrical Spectacle of 2018. All of these events on the final night are free for all Philadelphians.

If you go:

Through Dec. 31, Franklin Square Park, 200 N. 6th St., historicphiladelphia.org

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Adam Pally and Sam Richardson have Run the Jewels to thank for 'Champaign ILL'

The pair talks about their new YouTube Premium show from the team behind "Happy Endings."

ANDREW HUSBAND
letters@metro.us

Adam Pally and Sam Richardson, the comedy actors behind YouTube Premium's new series "Champaign ILL," are best known for their respective work with other teams or duos. For Pally, it's the cult-favorite series "Happy Endings," which ran for three seasons on ABC and was prematurely canceled in what Vulture has dubbed one of the worst TV decisions ever made. For Richardson, it's the critically acclaimed buddy comedy "Detroiters" on Comedy Central, which he co-created and co-stars in with Tim Robinson.

So of course the pair has another duo, comprised of hip-hop artists Killer Mike and El-P, to thank for what would eventually become their new show.

"I had met Sam at a Run the Jewels concert. We ended up hitting it off and hanging out for the whole show," Pally tells Metro. "So then when I started doing an Off-Broadway play with Anna Chlumsky not long after that, I was telling her about this new show I was doing with David Caspe, the creator of 'Happy Endings,' she was like, 'You have to meet Sam.' That's when I fell in love with him, and he has to live with that for the rest of his life."

"Adam is a fun dude," says Richardson. "He's a funny guy, very kind and thoughtful, so it's easy to assume there's a history there. It's easy to be familiar with him in this show. I just found it easy to jump into an assumed relationship between our characters, Ronnie and Alf. It's that kind of thing where the people have been friends for a very long time. With Adam, it's a pretty easy thing to do."

"Champaign ILL" follows Ronnie (Pally) and Alf (Richardson), the two main members of their friend-turned-rap star Lou (Jay Pharoah). They've supported their high school buddy's hip-hop career ever since they gave up their own dreams to do so, but now that Lou is dead, the duo must fend for themselves. As a re-

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Run the Jewels. GETTY IMAGES

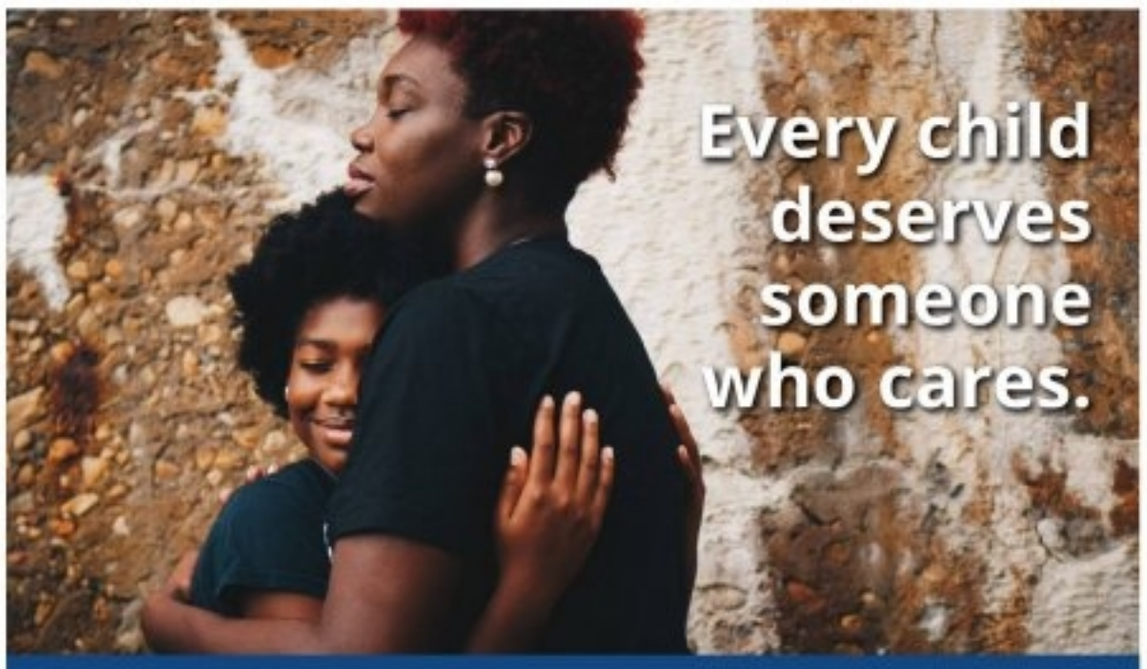
sult, the show manages to find itself tucked squarely into the "dramedy" genre that's been so popular on television as of late.

"Nine times out of 10, unless you're playing it super wacky, the approach is to play things as real as possible," says Richardson. "Even with the more out-there things that I do with this character, superficial things like his blond hair, chains and clothes, I play it as real as I possibly can. The blond hair isn't blond for the sake of being or looking crazy. These things all have a reason for being."

"I wouldn't say dramedy," Pally suggests in turn, "because I think what we're interested in doing is going back to this kind of era in comedy where the stakes mattered. You have to play with them as if they're real, though you can still make a big giant hokey idea come to life with it. For example, you still care about all of the people in 'Tropic Thunder,' even though that movie is an enormous idea and a little crazy at times. We're trying to go for something like that."

Whether or not viewers will categorize "Champaign ILL" as a comedy, a dramedy or some other television hybrid remains to be seen. According to the marketing materials YouTube has released so far, it seems the streamer is definitely leaning into the wackier side of the show's comedic elements. Judging by the first few episodes and Richardson and Pally's rapport on and off camera, however, a convincing argument can be made for its more dramatic elements.

"Champaign ILL" premieres Wednesday on YouTube Premium.



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EAGLES, ZEBRAS COMBINE TO BRING DISASTROUS END TO 2018 SEASON

THE SPORTS PROFESSOR

GLEN MACNOW
@RealGlenMacnow

There is an abundance of reasons why the Eagles lost to Dallas, 29-23, Sunday in Texas.

The offense sputtered through three quarters. Doug Pederson lost his play-calling mojo. Carson Wentz played hesitantly. The kicker missed a stinking extra point.

I could go on. The injured and exhausted defense couldn't stop the run — or the deep threat of Amari Cooper.

All those factors contributed to knocking the Birds to 6-7, and out of the playoff hunt. But another travesty more likely had you cursing into your pillow late into Sunday night: The refs stunk.

Oh boy, did they. I have a policy not to whine about officiating after a loss; it's too easy an excuse. But what occurred on the field Sunday as Jerry Jones cackled from above was so egregious that it needs to be reviewed from the very first play.

On that kickoff, Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins popped Dallas returner Jourdan Lewis and the ball flew free at the 18-yard line. Five — count 'em, five — Eagles pounced on the loose ball, and Kamu "Dallas Chokes" Grugier-Hill leaped up waving it to the refs.

Except referee Clete Blakeman somehow ruled Lewis was down before he fumbled, so Pederson had to challenge. Endless time passed, and then the replay ruling from New York decreed there was no "clear recovery" by the Eagles, even though there wasn't a silver-and-blue uniform within 10 feet of the pile. Outrageous.

Afterward, Blakeman blathered some inane mumbo-jumbo defending the call. Malcolm Jenkins cut through the bureaucrat-ese, saying, "whoever's watching that in New York needs to lay off the bottle."

The Eagles safety will certainly pay a hefty fine to the league for that honesty.

Alas, the opening kickoff was merely the beginning of the horror in black-and-white stripes. In the fourth quarter, there was a phantom offensive pass interference call that nullified a 75-yard touchdown to Dallas Goedert. On replay, the Eagles tight end appeared guilty of nothing more than trying to avoid being jammed at the line.

We'll leave the emphasis to Hall of Famer Terrell Owens, who played for both of these teams and tweeted at the moment: "The WORST call EVER!! These refs need to be heavily fined!! A swim move by the TE is Pass Interference now?!! WOW!"

That's seven angry exclamation points and one exasperated question mark, in case you're counting.

There was a myriad of other calls throughout the game — including one or two on Dallas — that boggled logic. Fox analyst Mike Pereira, the former NFL head of officials, seemed flummoxed when Joe Buck and Troy Aikman called on him for the 10th time.

The Eagles' season looks dead after the Cowboys pulled out an overtime win on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

And this is a huge problem for the NFL. The Eagles-Cowboys matchup Sunday was not the first showcase game this season marred by horrible officiating. It happens every week. The league is over-legislated with ticky-tack interpretations that leave on-field refs throwing flags on every play. The disembodied replay system confuses more than it clarifies. And the guys in black-and-white too often view themselves as the star attractions.

A great, great sport becomes an embarrassment. And bitter fans come away believing the zebras are impartial or incompetent — or both.

Look, I don't know if time-traveling to correct that opening kickoff fumble would have changed the result Sunday. As I said, the Eagles' own mistakes and lethargy contributed mightily.

And, much as this stinker drowned their playoff hopes down a well of disappointment, the Eagles' season was tossed away in horrible losses to Tampa Bay, Tennessee and Carolina.

But an important, highly anticipated game became a farce because of the pageant of flying yellow flags. That's an issue the league office on Park Avenue really needs to address.

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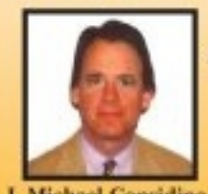

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Court of Common Pleas for the County of Philadelphia, October term, 2018, No. 002661.

Notice is hereby given that on October, 19th, 2018, the petition of: Isaac Murphy-Trotzky, praying for a decree to change his name to: Isaac Murphy. The Court has fixed court date December, 14th, 2018, at 9:15 AM, in Room No. 691 for hearing. All persons interested may appear and show cause if any they have, why the prayer of the said petition should not be granted.

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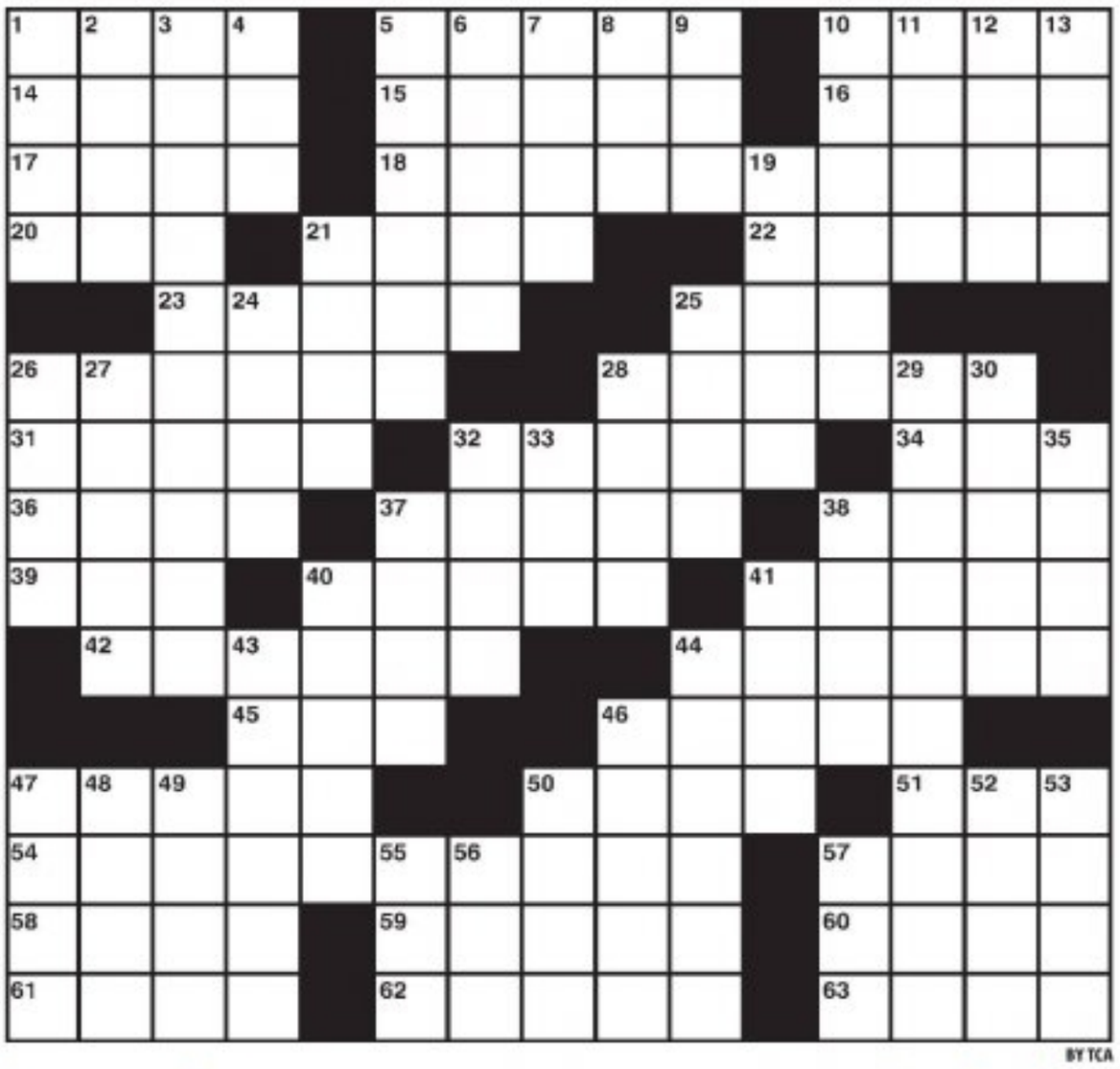

BY TCA

ACROSS

1 Buddy
5 __ at; deride
10 Fellow
14 "The Twilight __"
15 Excuse
16 Mount Fuji's output
17 Straight __ arrow
18 Inflammation of brain & spinal cord membranes
20 Gun the engine
21 Enjoy a long bath
22 City in England
23 Egyptian dam
25 Mad as a wet __
26 Taipei's island
28 Trusted counselor
31 Ease, as another's fears
32 Primp
34 Rollaway bed
36 Narrow opening
37 Thyroid or pituitary
38 Reminder of an old surgery
39 Relations
40 WA's Puget __
41 Terrify
42 Holiday drink
44 Cool dessert
45 Youth
46 Wynonna's mom
47 __ Allan Poe
50 Capital of the Cold War era's West Germany
51 "Son __ gun!"
54 Inexperienced beginner
57 Cabinet handle
58 Potter's need
59 Ascended
60 British noble
61 Punches
62 Overnight stop
63 Joy

DOWN

1 Russian leader of old
2 Rubber tube
3 To no effect; futile
4 Guys
5 Pago Pago resident
6 Spotless
7 Cry from the sty
8 "The __"; Efrem Zimbalist Jr. TV series
9 Swim __; diver's flipper
10 Customer
11 Detest
12 Gung ho
13 __ the buck; shift responsibility
19 Astronaut John __
21 Convince
24 Slap
25 Pay attention to
26 Chore
27 TV's "Kate & __"
28 Repair
29 Infrequent
30 Laughs loudly
32 Sink stopper
33 Galloped
35 Cypress or cedar
37 __ cholesterol; HDL
38 Bathtub ring
40 Catch in a trap
41 Before long
43 Knight, for one
44 Fireplace shelf
46 Loop with a slipknot
47 Engrave
48 Sandwich shop
49 Small fly
50 To __; also
52 Prefix for head or shadow
53 Capable
55 Crash into
56 To and __
57 Small barrel

metro.us/wordsearch

K	O	M	S	P	O	T	I	F	Y
F	N	E	L	J	F	B	N	A	O
C	I	S	N	I	T	N	S	C	U
P	F	S	P	O	A	T	T	E	T
G	D	E	A	G	H	M	A	B	U
Q	C	N	N	O	C	P	G	O	B
P	Q	G	D	O	P	L	R	O	E
J	C	E	O	G	A	A	A	K	R
G	N	R	R	L	N	Y	M	Q	Y
H	C	R	A	E	S	P	A	M	G

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Snapchat
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metro.us/wander

Category: Film

R	D	
S	T	E
A	R	V
N	G	O
	E	L

Trace a path, using every letter once, to find the hidden phrase. Your path can turn in any direction, but not diagonally.

metro.us/sudoku

9	1	2	3	7	4			
	7					1		3
4						7	2	9
2		1	9		6			5
	9	8	5		7	2	6	
6			2		8	3		4
7	3	6						2
5		9					1	
			7	6	5	9	3	8

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F	L	I	P			S	C	A	T		F	L	A	W
L	I	N	E	R		T	O	M	E		R	A	C	E
A	M	A	Z	E		A	B	A	N	D	O	N	E	D
N	O	D		J	A	G			A	R	N	E	S	S
		E	L	O	P	E			C	A	D			
A	C	Q	U	I	T			P	I	G	S	T	Y	
C	H	U	R	N		B	O	A	T	S		R	O	D
T	E	A	K		T	E	D	D	Y		B	I	D	E
S	A	T		B	O	N	D	S		S	E	V	E	N
	T	E	N	O	R	S			V	E	R	I	L	Y
			A	I	R			S	A	N	T	A		
S	P	O	U	S	E			A	L	I		L	O	B
C	O	N	G	E	N	I	A	L		O	P	I	N	E
A	R	C	H		T	O	G	A		R	A	Z	E	D
M	E	E	T		S	U	E	D			L	E	S	S

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